

and blessed dawning for all mankind. Long and dreary, yet lightened now and then by a ray of light falling, as it were, from some distant star, had been the night of time. Disobedience to God had engulfed the whole world in moral darkness. But the natural man craves for the light. They went in search after it as far as reason unaided could go. In response to this craving, God now and then, as men were ready, vouchsafed a ray of light to men. The darkness began to fade into a gray. Then a darkness more intense than ever came on. But it was only the deep darkness that always precedes the dawn; and Easter Day, nineteen centuries ago was the first full day in the moral world.

The first Easter dawn established for ever the immortality of the soul. "If a man die shall he live again" was until then the riddle of human existence. There had been here and there glimpses and pre-visions of immortality, faint gleams of light on the far horizon of the night. Socrates and Plato, Cicero and Seneca, with others, went as far as human vision unaided could go, yet the conception of immortality as held by them was very indefinite and unsatisfactory. Even the Jews to whom God spoke in many ways and upon different occasions held nothing definite concerning the soul's immortality. But when Christ arose on that first Easter-dawn, the full day light broke upon men of every age, race and civilization. This dawn gives a new meaning and purpose to history. Jesus Christ did not come to the earth as a star flits from one planet to another. Spiritually and essentially he was always in the world. He knew every stony path and rocky pass of Palestine. Mr Ruskin most beautifully says "that the hands that were nailed to the cross had covered the mountain top with snow and had upreared the rocks of Calvary." He was the "Rock in the weary land" that Israel followed. He their cloud by day and their pillar of fire by night. Israel's unique history can not be read apart from the presence and power of Christ. And men today appreciate that the same thought holds true with reference to the Gentile world. Minister Wu is not wrong when he insists that there is some truth in the religions of the East. Henry P. Smith once said that thru out the heathen services and sacrifices there ran a gleam of light wandering in search for an incarnate Savior. We now understand more clearly the purpose of God as well as the supreme motive force in the world's history. "He was the original light, lighting every man coming into the world."

This first Easter Dawn has also given a new value to human life. Christ not only burst the fetters of death and rose into the eternal fulness of life, but lifted the whole human race into immortality. In his silent and unseen struggle in the tomb the whole race shared, and the victory won was the victory of mankind over its greatest foe. We now know that we are more than *dust*; that life is more than *molecular* force and

that death is the *beginning* not the *end* of life. This life is temporary, transitory, preparative, determinative. During our present lifetime we set going the currents in our lives that shall determine the character of our changed existence. Life, therefore, is not a play ground, but a work room. It may appear strange that our short stay here can determine our whole future existence. Nevertheless it must be true. How diligent we should then be in the use of it! How careful and prudent in the formation of our life tendencies! How watchful we should be as to the thoughts we entertain, the words we utter, and the acts that we perform; for these recorded on life's pages and reported by some recording angel as the story of our lives, determines our character and our destiny forever.

The first Easter Dawn was the daybreak of immortality, the dawn of a joy, a hope, a faith that should never again fade from the skies. The light of that morning rests today upon every grave in Christendom, whether it is yet tenderly guarded or long time forgotten, and writes *Resurgam* above the sleeping dust. It also touches all the cares, the sorrows, the limitations of this present life and lightens them by whispering in the ear, that all these are but for the moment and worketh a far more and exceeding weight of glory. It penetrates the evil places of earth and finds its way into homes of misery and want and casts a heavenly illumination upon the faces of those that serve under the inspiration of this light.

The Dawn is only the prelude to the day. Slowly the night begins to fade around the horizon and slowly the light mounts to the zenith, but the dark is sure to break. In this respect natural light and spiritual light are analogous. More and more is the Sun of righteousness ascending toward the zenith. The whole is being moved and influenced by His light. And that Sun shows no signs of setting. Never was the outlook more hopeful for the universal spread of the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ than now. Christianity shall become what its Founder designed it should be—the light and salt of the whole earth. More and more is the light coming into the world and happy are they that discern its coming, live in its light and wait for the unspeakable joy of the noon-tide. For since God is our Father there is nothing too good to believe and hope for in man and in the future. Despite what any may say the world is moving toward a larger light and life. The kingdoms of this earth shall become the kingdoms of God. Man is moving in that direction. He that looks forward and upward discerns the deeper currents of the time and is *hopeful*. It is only when we turn our visions toward the retreating night that our theology becomes skeptical and pessimistic, our faith wavering and uncertain, our burdens and sorrows intolerable. When we turn toward the light of the glorious Easter Dawn and follow it as it moves upward towards the earth's horizon

our thought of God becomes larger, more trustful and richer in service and our hope for man and the future shines with a clearer and a steadier light.

DISSOLVING VIEWS

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Back in all the ages men have attempted to answer satisfactorily to their own hearts the query, "*If a man die shall he live again?*" The mother saw her babe taken rudely from her bosom by a black hand, and imploringly searched heaven for a beam of hope. One after another entered the dark unknown, leaving behind them wondering and inquiring hearts, endeavoring to know if the dead may live again. By and by, in the fulness of time, a man—a teacher sent from God—appeared in this poor sad world, and commenced a ministry of tenderness and power. Everything began to change. One-loving hand, in a lofty description, writes of him, "*In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*"

Three Evangelists give the record of Jesus' power over death in raising the daughter of a ruler in the Jewish synagogue. The story is pathetic. "*My little daughter lieth at the point of death; I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed; and she shall live.*" That was faith. Jesus went with him. Then came an interruption which seemed to dash the stoutest trust. The Christ must stop to cure a sick woman, and unbelief bears to the father the sad news, "*Thy daughter is dead!*" But he who is the resurrection and the life said, "*Be not afraid, only believe,*" and to the dead girl, "*I say unto thee arise.*" Death yielded his prey, and retreated to his place in darkness.

One Evangelist tells of Christ's omnipotent feat that called to life a widow's son, when his body was being borne to the grave by mourning friends. Death in this case had gained a more distinct victory. But what was that when the Lord of life drew near? The grim destroyer is commanded to release his victim, and the boy is delivered to his mother.

Another Evangelist records the evidence that Jesus defeated death in an account of the resurrection of Lazarus. His friend had been dead four days. The people said, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" But the Christ was about to do a greater work than that. Firmly came the words of Jesus, "Take ye away the stone." Then sounded forth that omnific mandate, "Lazarus come forth," and forever settled in many hearts the question, "If a man die shall he live again?"

A few months later the great restorer met death in his own personality. The enemy approached that holy, sinless, unpolluted shrine, and did the deadly deed. The body of our Lord, like those of the silent majority, was placed in the grave, and every precaution observed to keep it there. But true to the record of the past, on the third and appointed day, by the power of God, he arose, flung